

¹ This claim file is not presently before the Board. It is not clear if the acceptance in claim number xxxxxx660 was for hearing loss in one or both ears, or if appellant received a schedule award under this claim.

involves the same occupational disease, hearing loss, evidence contained therein will necessarily bear directly on appellant's claim in this case.² Furthermore, OWCP's January 2, 2015 decision, which found that appellant's hearing loss was not employment related, did not acknowledge that it had previously accepted the same condition in the two other claims. It is important for OWCP to fully consolidate the claims to ensure that all germane evidence is properly considered and that appropriate findings of fact are made. Accordingly, for a full and fair adjudication, all OWCP claims pertaining to appellant's hearing loss should be combined.³

The Board will remand the case to OWCP to combine claim number xxxxxx660 with master claim number xxxxxx831. Following this and such other development as deemed necessary, OWCP shall issue an appropriate merit decision on appellant's claim.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT the January 2, 2014 decision of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs is set aside and the case record remanded for further action consistent with this order of the Board.

Issued: July 29, 2015
Washington, DC

Christopher J. Godfrey, Chief Judge
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board

Patricia H. Fitzgerald, Deputy Chief Judge
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board

Colleen Duffy Kiko, Judge
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board

² See K.A., Docket No. 13-207 (issued April 12, 2013).

³ R.A., Docket No. 14-1828 (issued February 25, 2015). See Federal (FECA) Procedure Manual, Part 2 -- Claims, *File Maintenance and Management*, Chapter 2.400.8(c) (February 2000) (cases should be doubled when correct adjudication of the issues depends on frequent cross-reference between files such as where a new injury case is reported for an employee who previously filed an injury claim for a similar condition or the same part of the body).